



THE GENERATION NEWSLETTER
Of



The 1773 - Colonial Virginia Copper Halfpenny

W. N. Veach
Founder/Editor

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"Resolve to protect its
historic integrity and
to promote its welfare"

Of General Interest

Of all the many Newman variety sets of the 1773 Colonial Virginia copper Halfpenny to be admired for its minting perfection and collected for its extreme rarity, the "Pattern" piece or variety set: I-A is without a doubt "the" one to obtain. And so, this Issue's Feature Subject explores this unusual short set.

MEMBERSHIPS: (26) Increased by two

Welcome Gerald A. Schmidt of Imperial Coins in Richmond, Virginia. He has been a long standing member of the Virginia Numismatic Association. He has even chosen the 1773 Colonial Virginia copper halfpenny reverse as his logo. Also, we have added Joe Esposito of Springfield, Virginia to our ranks. Joe is a very ardent collector of the 1773 Colonial Virginia coppers. Both have caught up with us in all previous issues.

FEATURE SUBJECT

The desirability of collecting the scarce "Pattern" piece of the 1773 Colonial Virginia copper halfpenny.

While not being technically considered as coinage minted for the purpose of circulation, nor intended to be acceptable in honest trade, the approximately 19 or so (let's say 19 for simplicity's sake) 1773 Virginia Halfpenny Pattern pieces are today one of Numismatics unique collectables.

Having been minted in "proof" condition, these few choice sample coins are so rare that it's unimaginable that one (even with a bluish tone visible) would show up for public acquisition, much less year after year.

And, while these 19 Pattern pieces are listed as one of the many officially recognized Newman variety sets, they actually constitute an entirely separate mintage - - - not included among the official "5 tons" and not shipped to the colony of Virginia, in 1774, for distribution and general circulation as legal issue.

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Feature Subject, Cont'd ---

So, now realizing that these 19 proof Pattern pieces are something very special, where do we go from here? Well, if anyone is interested in acquiring one or more of these exclusive 19 proof specimens, then the buyer, as well as the seller, should have a good idea of its overall condition - - - relevant to the condition of each of the other 18 proof Pattern pieces.

I would imagine that if one could account for the exact condition of each one of these Pattern pieces, then it would make sense to classify them as a closed set, in descending order, with specimen number 19 at the top of the list, hence representing the one in the best condition, and also indicating the numeric extent of this set. Knowing the whereabouts of all these specimens would help.

However, not having seen each one, I would propose qualifying this list with descending categories of conditions representing the entire range of possibilities, from number 19 as a perfect proof specimen with no defects or damage - - - to the number 1 as the least desirable member which has been perhaps "drilled" or even "rotoed" around the rim, possibly mounted previously as jewelry or on a belt buckle.

Eventually, as a photo library is established, the exact condition of each coin on the list may be determined, hopefully. Until that time, I would propose the following 1773 Virginia halfpenny Pattern piece condition list. Upon the expert advise that most of these Pattern pieces would seem to be in excellent condition, for their age, I've allowed for most of them to be accounted for as having only slight detractions. Even so, it is still quite easy to assess the relevant position on this list of any given specimen as compared to other Pattern pieces of higher or lower quality.

Moreover, a tentative price list can also be applied to this relative quality listing. This would be of some assistance to buyers. However, no seller would need to feel bound by this price list, whatsoever.

This set of 19 (once) proof specimens is not only historically unique in Colonial American heritage, but they also constitute an extremely limited set at that. Very few people in the world can say that they have one of these rare Pattern pieces, in any condition at all!

Sincerely,

William N. Veach
William N. Veach

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1773 - COLONIAL VIRGINIA COPPER HALFPENNY

I-A (Proof) "Pattern" Piece

Comments: *****	Ranking: *****	Extent of Condition *****	Price: *****
Robert Vlack 1976 sale	19 18 * 17 16	Exceptionally well preserved " " " " " " " " "	\$22500 18500 17000 16000
NOTE:			
4 of these Pattern pieces are said to reside in the Ashmolean Museum Collectn in Oxford Univ., England.	15 * 14 * 13 * 12 * 11	Very well preserved/ toning " " " " Very well preserved/ dark " " " " " " " "	15000 14000 13000 12000 11000
	10 9	Well presv'd/ not proof-like " " " "	10000 9000
Smithsonian Inst. / 1990	8 7 *	Well presv'd/ but dull looking " " " "	8000 7000
Bowers/Merena 1992 sale of 1t brown, w/bluish toning.	6 * 5	No physical damage/ discolored " " " "	6000 5000
→ VNA sale/ Richmond, VA '92	4 * 3 2	" " " " Some physical damage/ scratches Some physical damage/ bent	4000 3000 3000
Seen Balt. Coin Show, 1989	1 *	Drilled, rotored, or mounted previously, as in jewelry	2500

The above listing is obviously incomplete. Anyone acquiring any additional information that could help make the above listing any more accurate and complete, please send your information to myself, William N. Veach, at 2238 Loch Lomond Drive, Vienna, Virginia 22181. A photo would be greatly appreciated and would stand up for many years.

Question: Why is it that the actual dies from the Newman variety set of I-A never seem to have been found? They were totally different. Furthermore, these two dies were by far more symetrically perfect in total design than any of the others. What did happen to these two perfect dies, anyway?

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LIST OF MEMBERSHIPS WITH ADDRESSES
(By State, Alphabetically)

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STATE *****	NAME *****	ADDRESS *****	PHONE *****
CALIFORNIA	Jack Beymer	737 Coddington Center Santa Rosa, CA 95401	(800) 635-6040
CONNECTICUT	Robert Vlack	18 Mist Hill Drive Brookfield, CT 06804	(203) 775-2456
MARYLAND	Glen Burger	P. O. Box 9009 Timonium, MD 21093	(301) 252-4779
MARYLAND	Barry Tayman	5424 Smooth Meadow Way Columbia, MD 21044	(301) 997-1740
MISSOURI	Peter P. Gaspar	c/o Washington Univ. Dept. of Chemistry St. Louis, MO 63130	(314) 889-6568
MISSOURI	Eric P. Newman	6450 Cecil Avenue St. Louis, MO 63105	(314) 331-6540
NEW HAMPSHIRE	Mark Borckardt	c/o Bowers & Merena Box 1224 Wolfboro, NH 03894	(603) 569-5095
NEW HAMPSHIRE	Q. David Bowers	c/o Bowers & Merena Box 1224 Wolfboro, NH 03894	(603) 569-5095
<u>NEW JERSEY</u>	<u>Dr. Roger Moore</u>	435 Camden Avenue Moorestown, NJ 08057	(856) 235-4712
NEW YORK	American Numismatic Society	c/o Francis Campbell Broadway & 155th Street New York, NY 10032	(212) 234-3130
NEW YORK	Carl Carlson	123 W. 57th Street New York, NY 10019	(212) 582-2580 c/o STACKS
NEW YORK	Norm Peters	P. O. Box 29 Lancaster, NY 14086	(716) 683-2722
NEW YORK	Mike Ringo	P. O. Box 3010 Albany, NY 12203	(518) 377-3423
NEW YORK	Gary Trudgen	3103 Chatham Road Endwell, NY 13760	(607) 785-7786

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STATE *****	NAME *****	ADDRESS *****	PHONE *****
NORTH CAROLINA	Keith Wolf	P. O. Box 1307 Dobson, NC 27017	(919) 374-5831
OHIO	Jack Borckardt	P. O. Box 1125 Findlay, OH 45839	(419) 422-7592
PENNSLYVANIA	Marc Calciano	1566 Chester Pike Folcroft, PA 19032	(215) 534-2646
<u>VIRGINIA</u>	<u>Alan Anthony</u>	592 Rockbride Drive Leesburg, VA 20175	(703)
VIRGINIA	Dayne Cantrell	c/o Roger Staples Coins 7059 Brookfield Plaza Springfield, VA 22150	(703) 569-7300
VIRGINIA	John Davis	The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (Curator: Medals & Coins) Williamsburg, VA 23187	(804) 220-7511
VIRGINIA	Ron Iliffe	P. O. Box 11522 Burke, VA 22009	(703) 978-4719
VIRGINIA	Jim Kelly	The Virginia Historical Society (Asst. Dir.) 428 N. Boulevard St. Richmond, VA 23220	(804) 342-9656
VIRGINIA	Gerald A. Schmidt	Imperial Coins (VNA) 5th & Franklin Streets Richmond, VA 2321	(800) 644-6440
VIRGINIA	Bill Veach	4 Canela Court Homasassa, FL 34446-4730	(352) 382-8919
WASHINGTON, D.C.	Cory Gilliland	c/o Smithsonian Institute Room 4000, Numismatic Dept. Museum of Amer. History Washington, D.C. 20560	(202) 357-1798

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